

## **EVS465/EVSn5065 Brexit: Politics, Policies and Processes**

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### **Brief characteristics of the course**

- academic year 2019/2020, spring semester
- 5 credits, exam

### **Course overview**

The course focuses on one of the most important and controversial topics in modern British politics – Brexit. Having placed Brexit in the appropriate historical context, the module helps students understand the United Kingdom's (UK) uneasy engagement and entanglement with the European Union (EU). It sets out the key fundamentals for understanding the issues, events and development, both short-term and long-term, that led to the 2016 in/out referendum (and its result), the political turmoil that has resulted from it and the crisis that the UK currently faces. In doing so, the module helps students understand some of the historical, political, legal, cultural and socio-economic dynamics of Brexit, whilst inter alia examining key debates over immigration, economy and sovereignty, explaining the changing media landscape and scrutinising various exit strategies. As such, the course will appeal to those who want to make sense of the complexities of Brexit as well as to those who seek to discuss the Brexit process and related debates as they evolve.

The aim of the course is to offer students a chance to understand some of the historical, political, legal, cultural and socio-economic dynamics of Brexit. It also aims at providing students with a critical understanding of the key issues underlying the Brexit process and its dynamic (and uncertain) agenda. At the same time, it seeks to place Brexit in the appropriate historical context and locate the key Brexit-related issues within the relevant theoretical and conceptual debates.

### **Learning outcomes**

Having successfully completed this course, you will be able to:

- place Brexit in its appropriate historical context;
- describe key short- and long-term factors and issues behind the UK's vote to leave the EU;
- demonstrate an understanding of wider political, economic and socio-cultural dynamics surrounding Brexit;
- identify and describe current trends in negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU;
- have a deeper insight into complex and wide-ranging consequences of Brexit;
- get a better understanding of how to study Brexit – an area that touches on a myriad of other issues and is in state of constant flux;
- show an ability to place the key Brexit-related issues within the relevant theoretical and conceptual debates.

## Teaching methods

Classes comprise lectures (first 50 minutes) and seminars (second 50 minutes), with the seminars thematically related to the lectures. Apart from traditional teaching methods, also various activating teaching methods (such as, for instance, discussions, heuristic or situational methods and didactic games) will be regularly included. Moreover, the module will also incorporate specialist guest lectures delivered by external experts (from the British Embassy in Prague, Office of the Government of the Czech Republic but also others) with extensive experience in dealing with Brexit. Students will benefit greatly from being exposed to additional perspectives that these experts will provide.

Students are always encouraged to ask questions at any time. Student contributions to discussion and presentation sections are valuable for the class.

## Requirements for successful completion of the course

- **Seminar leadership = a presentation given in groups.**
  - The length of the presentation mustn't exceed **10 minutes** (the instructor will stop any presentation that goes beyond 10 minutes). The presentation must conform to the department's standards ([www.mves.cz](http://www.mves.cz)) and be analytical, not only descriptive.
  - In addition to the 10-minute presentation, seminar leaders will design a **5-minute class activity**, such as, for instance, a mini debate, a film clip, small group activity. Please, be sure to explain the purpose of the activity exercise and its key points. Seminar leaders' responsibility is to ensure broad participation, keep the discussion focused, and enforce the time limits. Please, do not use the type of activity that the previous presentation leaders used. It is the variety that keeps our attention ☺ Students who do not include an activity fail the assignment.
  - The presentation will be based **relevant sources** (journal articles, books) **that the students will find themselves** (databases such as Cambridge, Oxford, SAGE, Wiley Online available in the electronic resources of the FSS library are highly recommended).
  - Students will submit the PowerPoint presentation to the appropriate homework vault (odevzdávárna) on the day of the presentation at the latest.
  - The presentation will also include a list of sources with full citation information at the end of the presentation.
  - The presentation is worth a maximum of 10 points. It is, of course, possible to discuss the concept of the presentation and its content in advance with the teacher.
  - Students will also receive peer-to-peer feedback on their presentations.
  
- **Keeping track with current Brexit-related news and events.** Students are required to keep up with current Brexit-related news events which can be done by regularly reading quality newspapers, news magazine, or watching broadcast news. Each week (except for the week during which the expert lectures will be held), students will prepare a brief report on three Brexit-related news.
  - These reports will be submitted the day before the lecture (i.e. on Monday 8 pm) to the appropriate homework vault (odevzdávárna) in IS. No late submissions will be accepted.
  - The scope of the report roughly one paragraph per a news story.

- Reports will not be copied from the website/source but will be written in students' own words and will include a list of sources.
  - One report is worth a maximum of 1 point. In total, students can earn as many as 10 points for reports. The report can be submitted (and rewarded a point) even if the student is absent from the seminar.
  - Students will bring the reports also the class.
- **Preparing questions for expert lectures.** For each of the expert lectures (their exact dates will be announced in due course), students will prepare three questions which will be submitted the day before the lecture (i.e. Monday 8 pm) to the appropriate homework vault (odevzdávárna) in IS. Students will bring these questions also to the class session. One set of questions is worth a maximum of 1 point (that is, two points for both expert lectures). For the week on which the expert lecture will be held, the students will not have to submit Brexit news reports.
  - **Participation in seminars.** Seminar attendance is mandatory and will be taken by a sign-in sheet. Maximum of two seminar absences is allowed. Students must attend the seminar for which they have signed up to deliver a presentation.
  - **Active engagement in seminar discussion which are** based on the study of the assigned readings, and the monitoring of current news in Brexit. Students are expected to complete course readings before the class. Thorough preparation is particularly important because the class discussions will be designed to extend and critique (as opposed to summarize) the ideas in the readings. Students are therefore encouraged to bring individual copies (in their PCs, for instance) of the required texts to all class sessions.
  - **Passing a final written test.** The test is worth a maximum of 30 points.

**Requirements for successful completion of the course are distributed as follows:**

- Presentation: max. 10 points
- Current news reports/questions for expert lectures: max. 12 points
- Final written exam: max. 30 points.

Students must meet an overall minimum of 60 % of the points to successfully complete the course.

## **Course content**

- ❖ *Please note that there will be several guest lecturers in the class (for instance, by people from the British embassy in Prague or the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic). Their exact dates will be announced in due course.*
- ❖ *Please have all the readings listed below in the course schedule read before the day of discussion.*
- ❖ *If you want to find something or are keen to explore a topic, please ping me an email, give me a call or drop by and I'll help!*

### **Week 1 (18. 2. 2020) Introduction**

The first week serves as an introduction to the course and topic, but especially an introduction to each other. We'll cover the syllabus and a basic introduction to the course.

## **Week 2 (25. 2. 2020) Understanding the background to Brexit: History of UK-EU relations I**

### **Assigned readings**

- Geddes, Andrew (2004). The European Union and British Politics. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 57-73.
- Usherwood, Simon (2018). The Third Era of British Euroscepticism: Brexit as a Paradigm Shift. The Political Quarterly, Vol. 89, No. 4, pp. 553-559.
- Daddow, Oliver a Oliver, Tim (2016). A not so awkward partner: the UK has been a champion of many causes in the EU. LSE Blog, 15 April.  
<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2016/04/15/a-not-so-awkward-partner-the-uk-has-been-a-champion-of-many-causes-in-the-eu/>

## **Week 3 (3. 3. 2020) **NO CLASS; reading week.** Understanding the background to Brexit: History of UK-EU relations II**

### **Assigned readings**

- Todd, John (2016). The UK's Relationship with Europe: Struggling over Sovereignty. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 31-55.
- Smith, Julie (2016). David Cameron's EU renegotiation and referendum pledge: A case of déjà vu? British Politics, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 324-346.

## **Week 4 (10. 3. 2020) **NO CLASS.** Analysing the referendum result**

Please note that there will be no class this week. Instead, Students will listen to the lecture in the podcast and will read the assigned readings.

### **Assigned readings**

- Mckenzie, L. (2017). 'It's not ideal': Reconsidering 'anger' and 'apathy' in the Brexit vote among an invisible working class. Competition and Change, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 199-210.
- Goodwin, Matthew and Milazzo, Caitlin (2017). Taking back control? Investigating the role of immigration in the 2016 vote for Brexit. The British Journal of Politics and International Relations, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 450-464.

## **Week 5 (17. 3. 2020) Road to the Leave vote: Renegotiations**

### **Assigned readings**

- Glencross, Andrew (2018). Cameron's European legacy: How Brexit demonstrates the flawed politics of simple solutions. In: Martill, Benjamin a Staiger, Uta (eds) Brexit and Beyond: Rethinking the Futures of Europe. London: UCL Press, pp. 22-28.
- Smith, Julie (2018). Gambling on Europe: David Cameron and the 2016 referendum. British Politics, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 1-16.

## **Week 6 (24. 3. 2020) Referendum campaign**

### **Assigned readings**

- Glencross, Andrew (2016). The EU Referendum Campaign. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 35-46.

## **Week 7 (31. 3. 2020) Dynamics of Brexit negotiations**

### **Assigned readings**

- Hix, S. (2018). Brexit: Where is the EU-UK Relationship Heading? JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies.
- Allen, N. (2018). “Brexit means Brexit”: Theresa May and post-referendum British politics. British Politics, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 105–120.

*Presentation no I: Possible scenarios for the UK-EU relations: Norway, Canada and others (Which one is the most likely?)*

*Presentation No. II: The Irish backstop: why has it caused so much trouble?*

## **Week 8 (7. 4. 2020) Brexit and Party Politics**

### **Assigned readings**

- Lynch, P., & Whitaker, R. (2018). All Brexiteers now? Brexit, the Conservatives and party change. British Politics, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 31–47.
- Baldini, G., Bressanelli, E., & Massetti, E. (2018). Who is in Control? Brexit and the Westminster Model. The Political Quarterly.

*Presentation No. III: Labour Party’s perspectives on Brexit*

*Presentation No. IV: British media and the EU: what is so special about the British media’s approach towards the EU?*

## **Week 9 (14. 4. 2020) EU’s unity in Brexit: Brexit and EU institutions**

### **Assigned readings**

- Chopin, Thierry and Lequesne, Christian (2020) Disintegration reversed: Brexit and the cohesiveness of the EU27. Journal of Contemporary European Studies, online first.

*Presentation No. V: Scotland and Brexit: between the two unions*

*Presentation No. VI: Brexit and the Special UK-US Relationship: not so special anymore?*

## **Week 10 (21. 4. 2020) EU27’s Brexit: perspectives on Brexit of EU27**

### **Assigned readings**

- Brusenbauch Meislová, Monika (2019). Full of surprises, or surprisingly not? The peculiar case of Czech Brexit policy. European Politics and Society, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 91-117.

**Week 11 (28. 4. 2020) NO CLASS; reading week. Brexit and European integration theory.**

### **Assigned readings**

- Jensen, Mads and Jesper Dahl Kelstrup (2019), House United, House Divided: Explaining the EU's Unity in the Brexit Negotiations. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 57, p. 28-39.

### **Week 12 (5. 5. 2020) Brexit implications for the UK and the EU**

#### **Assigned readings**

- Cini, Michelle a Verdun, Amy (2018). The implications of Brexit for the future of Europe. In: Martill, Benjamin a Staiger, Uta (eds). *Brexit and Beyond: Rethinking the Futures of Europe*. London: UCL Press, pp. 63-71.

### **Week 13 (12. 5. 2020) Exam: first term**